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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

25X1A

COUNTRY Bulgaria
SUBJECT The City of Ruse

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COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 23 August 1955

SUBJECT City of Ruse

NO. OF PAGES 5

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1. Following is the legend for the sketch on page 5 . All of the streets listed below were approximately six meters wide.

1. Stalin Street, cobblestoned.
2. Vasil Kolarov Street, cobblestoned.
3. Vozrazhdane Allee, crushed stone.
4. Silistra Street, crushed stone.
5. Medzhydiya Street, crushed stone.
6. Tutrakan (N 44-02, E 26-36)-Silistra (N 44-08, E 27-17) Highway, crushed stone.
7. Highway to Lipnik, crushed stone.
8. Shipka Street, crushed stone.
9. Mostrova Street, crushed stone.
10. Vovevodova Street, crushed stone.
11. Ouben Karavelov Street, crushed stone.
12. Veliko Tervovo Street, crushed stone.
13. Dimitar Blagoev Street, cobblestoned.

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14. Pirof Street, cobblestoned.
15. Tsar Kaleyan Street, cobblestoned.
16. 18th of February Street, crushed stone.
17. Vezhen Street, crushed stone.
18. 9th of September Square, concrete.
19. Highway to Byala (N 43-27, E 25-44), cobblestoned.
20. Maxim Gorkiy Street, crushed stone.
21. Tsar Shishman Street, crushed stone.
22. Dondukov Korsakov Street, crushed stone.
23. Bozveli Street, crushed stone.
24. Tyla Street, crushed stone.
25. Paniot Hitov Street, crushed stone.
26. General Skobilev Street, cobblestoned.
27. Ivan Vazov Street, cobblestoned.
28. Kniaz Asperukh Street, cobblestoned.
29. Ivan Dimitrov Street, cobblestoned.
30. Yanko Sakyzov Street, cobblestoned.
31. Chernomore Street, crushed stone.
32. Red Square, concrete.
33. Pedko D. Petkov Street, cobblestoned.
34. Angel Kynchev Street, crushed stone.
35. Dimitar Anastasov Street, crushed stone.
36. Ana Ventura Street, crushed stone.
37. Georgi Dimitrov Street, cobblestoned.
38. Peter Beron Street, crushed stone.
39. Tsarigrad Street, crushed stone.
40. 6th of September Street, crushed stone.
41. Stanko Dimitrov Street, crushed stone.
42. Tsar Osvooboditel (Liberator) Boulevard, partly crushed stone and partly cobblestoned.
43. Union (Soyedineniye) Boulevard, cobblestoned.
44. Vardar Street, crushed stone.
45. Arda Street, crushed stone.

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Fire Fighting Facilities

2. There was only one fire station in Ruse; it was located on Stalin Street (Point 1 on page 5). This station housed about 10 fire trucks which had motor pumps; the trucks carried 2,000-lit. water tanks.
3. Only the central part of Ruse had water conduits which could be tapped for fire fighting emergencies. The conventional type of fire hydrant, as found in the US, was unknown in Bulgarian cities. The fire station in Ruse also had a few outmoded horse-drawn, hand-pump fire trucks but they were to be replaced by more modern equipment. There were no fire reporting boxes anywhere on the streets of Ruse; fires were reported to the fire station by telephone. Industrial enterprises in Ruse had internal fire fighting equipment, usually glass-encased water hoses on reels, which could be connected to water pipes in case of fire.

Telephone Facilities

4. Only government buildings, CP members, certain doctors, engineers, etc. had telephones. Most of the population used the telephones which were usually located in railroad and bus terminals.
5. The central telephone exchange was located on 9th of September Square (Point 18 on page 5). The building was stuccoed and measured 80x60x10m. Source believes that fewer persons in Bulgaria have telephones today than before the Communist regime because of the widespread poverty; the cost for a telephone was prohibitive.

Electricity for Homes and Streets

6. Although the majority of the homes in Ruse had electricity, very few persons could afford to pay the cost of using more than one 40-watt bulb. Individual rooms rarely had more than one bulb burning. Those homes which had no meters were charged a flat monthly rate per bulb; homes which had meters paid according to the consumption of electricity.
7. Only the major streets in Ruse were illuminated at night. Source estimated that there were only 10 such streets in the city. After midnight, all street illumination was cut off.

Radio and Television

8. Only five per cent of the population owned radios. The cheaper radios cost about 900 leva and were therefore unattainable by the average worker who earned 500 leva per month; radios were taxed 50 leva a year. Most of the radios source had seen were four-tube sets which were capable of receiving Western broadcasts. When asked about the possibility of building a radio, in view of the exorbitant price, source claimed that it would be a dangerous adventure and would invite arrest; all radios were registered with the government.
9. As far as source knows, no one owned a television set in Bulgaria; he had never even seen anything printed about television in the newspapers.

Housing Conditions and Health

10. The possibility for procuring living quarters in any Bulgarian city was out of the question. Most families were quartered in only a single room which had to serve as a bedroom, kitchen, and living room. An increase in a family was not sufficient grounds to compel the government housing administration to intervene. Hundreds of persons unsuccessfully crowded the housing offices with applications for housing. Village and farm populations tended to migrate to the large cities where life, even under crowded living conditions, was much better than working on farms for a pittance. Following the end of the war, large mass migrations flooded

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Bulgarian cities; those who came stayed but others who came later were not so fortunate because the housing situation had become so critical.

11. Although the Bulgarian Government constructed housing projects, there were not enough to keep up with the migration of the rural population to the cities. To make the situation worse, newly-constructed housing was usually earmarked for Party functionaries and their families, much to the bitterness of the worker. Although the Bulgarian Government realized the great need for additional living space, it was apparently unable to do anything about it. These cramped, unsanitary living conditions were beginning to push the mortality rate higher, particularly through tuberculosis.
12. Source was convinced that tuberculosis was higher in Bulgaria today than at any other time in the past 50 years. Poor living conditions, hard work, and moral and physical depression were taking their toll on the health of the Bulgarian worker. Although medicine was socialized, hospitalization was theoretically free; but there were only four hospitals and polyclinics in Ruse, with a total of about 500 beds, to administer to a population of 70,000. Doctors were slipshod in diagnosing sicknesses and were not conscientious about their professions. Doctors earned little more than an average laborer, 600 leva per month.

Unemployment and Compensation

13. The labor office on Dimitar Blagoev Street (Point 13 on page 5) was always crowded with 50 to 60 persons looking for work. Source estimated that 10% of the able-bodied labor force of Ruse was unemployed. These persons received no unemployment funds from the government and since the government could not admit to unemployment, there was no talk of unemployment compensation.
14. Source believes that the industrial expansion did not keep pace with the increase in the cosmopolitan population. Those who had no work were left to shift for themselves. "No work, no eat" seemed to be the government's attitude.
15. Workers who became incapacitated through an accident, i.e., loss of arm or leg, were more fortunate; they received about 120 to 150 leva every three months for a short period of time. Soldier-invalids received a maximum of 200 leva every three months. Source never heard of old age pensions.

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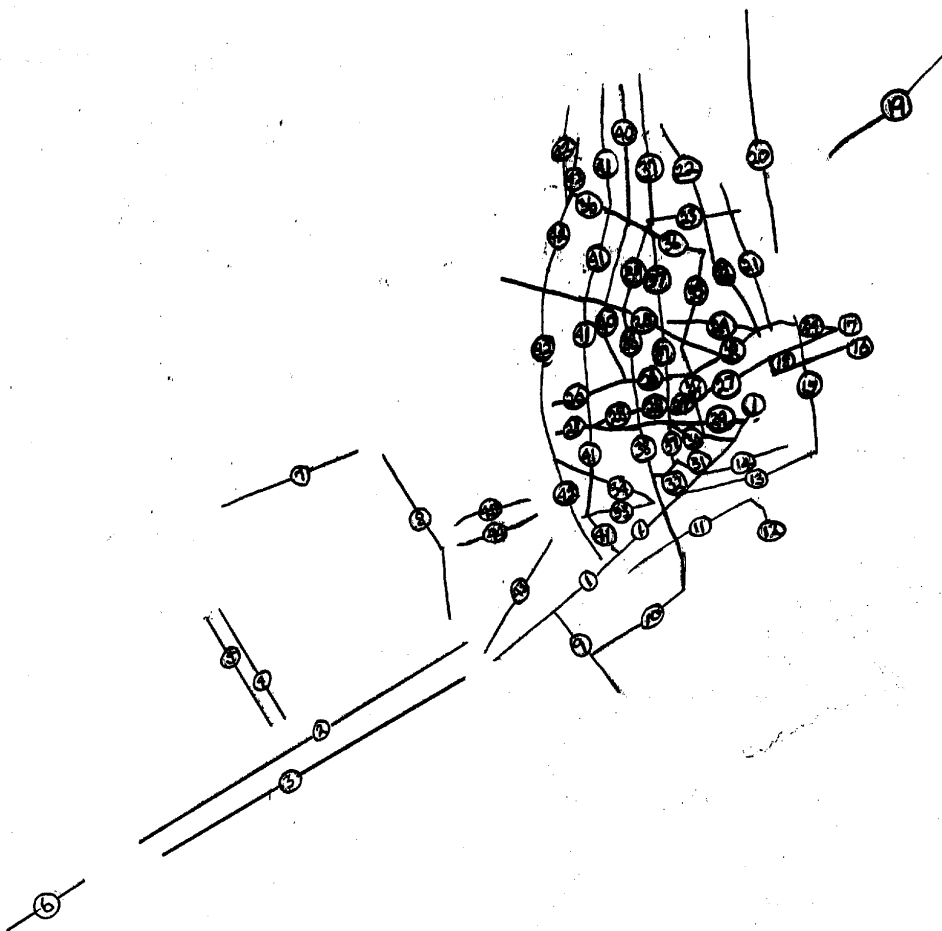
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